

**IRIS Area and International Studies Awards for Incoming Graduate Students
Post Research Report | 2023**

**Cynthia T. Baeza, Department of Curriculum & Instruction
University of Wisconsin-Madison**

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS) and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the School of Education for nominating and selecting me as a grant recipient. My research focus is on the intersection of Bilingual and Science Education, focusing on how socio-historical issues of race and language continue to shape inclusion and equity efforts in bilingual classroom settings. I strongly believe that my research is relevant to an international audience, an audience that can better be reached through international studies awards support.

As a doctoral candidate, discussing my research with colleagues, presenting my work, and building networking opportunities becomes increasingly important. One way in which I have been able to do this is by presenting at national and international conferences for the past three years. This year, I was accepted to present at the European Science Education Research Association (ESERA) international conference (August 25-September 1) in Cappadocia, Turkey. Attending the ESERA conference was an outstanding growth opportunity for my professional work as a researcher in the field of science education. The conference, which my advisor attended as well, provided networking opportunities with colleagues and colleagues of my advisor. These networking opportunities opened the door for me to share my work and plan future collaborations (e.g., I was invited as a virtual guest speaker at the University of Malmö in Sweden this Fall). Moreover, presenting a co-authored published paper at the conference allowed me to reach a wider international audience and receive feedback on the work related to that project.

I was able to use my IRIS Award funds to cover the expenses for this international travel. The funds covered my airfare, lodging, meals, and other related expenses. Attending international conferences to expand dissertation work is a priority of mine due to the extensive opportunities that learning from colleagues whose research is based on different parts of the world can bring. Having the IRIS Award to cover these expenses gave me peace of mind on the financial end so I could focus on the work I was going to present. I am thankful for the trust

placed in me and my research. I look forward to continuing working on my dissertation research and seeking opportunities to support my training as a researcher and future scholar.